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3 November 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR**SUBJECT: More Vietnam Numbers Problems**

1. In light of the impending USIB consideration of NIE 14.3-67, you should be aware of the attached exchange of traffic which bears on both the estimate's and the U.S. Government's present handling of the problem of counting and classifying Viet Cong guerrillas and other paramilitary or "militia" forces.
2. The estimate draft distinguishes the guerrillas from the others (self defense, secret self defense, assault youth, etc.). The draft contains the judgment, agreed in Saigon, that the number of guerrillas is now probably in the 70,000 - 90,000 range. It gives no quantified guess regarding the current number of other irregular elements, a point also agreed in Saigon.
3. We on the American side, particularly COMUSMACV, have always drawn a sharper distinction between the guerrillas and the other paramilitary elements than is drawn by the Communists. Evidence has recently come to light which suggests the VC may be further blurring this distinction to the point where our rather arbitrary U.S. breakout may be more misleading than helpful. We will need to do a lot more concentrated research in this area and the results of this research will probably require a recasting of the 14.3 figures and definitions regarding guerrillas and other local VC elements.
4. I am not suggesting that the estimate should be withheld nor am I advocating that the bidding should once again be reopened

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on its paragraphs which relate to this very sticky and complex problem. You should be aware, however, of the potential import of recently acquired evidence and of the Statica's views on this matter, which are expressed in paragraph six of the attached Saigon cable.

George A. Carver, Jr.
Special Assistant for Vietnamese Affairs

Attachments

cc: DDCI
D/ONE
ONE - Mr. Hyland
DDI
D/OCI
OCI - [redacted]
OER - [redacted]
C/FE
C/VNG

25X1
25X1

O/DCI/SAVA:VAS:GACarver:taw:3Nov67

Distribution:

As above w/2 atts

1 - VAS Chrono w/atts

1 - GAC Chrono w/atts ✓

1 - SAA n/atts

1-14.3-67 New OB ✓

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